

THE OLIVE TREE

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E. LEIGH MUDGE



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The Olive Tree

By

E. LEIGH MUDGE



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The Olive Branch



THE LEGEND OF THE OLIVE TREE

That it might shelter me,
Before my hermit cave, by earnest toil
With heavy mattock, in the fertile soil
I planted an olive tree.

My olive seemed to be
So parched and dry my toil would soon be vain.
Anxious, I knelt and prayed—and God sent rain
Upon my olive tree.

Since God had answered me,
Whene'er I thought my olive needed sun,
Or wind, or frost, I asked—and it was done
Unto my olive tree.

At last—ah, me!
After the frost, I deemed my tree had need
Of hot south wind. Again my God gave heed;
It killed my olive tree.

Then did I see,
Growing luxuriantly before
My brother hermit's lowly door,
Another olive tree.

“My brother, tell to me
The secret of thy goodly olive there,
When neither anxious thought nor answered
prayer
Hath saved my olive tree.”

And thus he answered me:
“Better than I, God knew its every need;
His care I trusted, and He gave good heed,
And blessed my olive tree.”

Then did I see
The faithless spirit of my granted prayer;
And now I pray, “O God, from anxious care
May I be free.”

HAPPINESS

In gold-bought palace fair,
Where servants at our bidding come and go,
Where wealth makes friends, and ease would
banish care?
Ah, no!

But in a heart with deep desires removed
From selfishness, some other heart to bless,
Content to serve, loving and being loved,
Is happiness.

THE LIGHT OF PARADISE

This morning a new glory met her eyes,
Those eyes so full of loving tenderness
That hid the image of a shadowed pain;
Brave eyes, sweet eyes, that looked in yours
and mine,
Unquestioningly true; that held in their clear
deeps
The light of summer, and that mystery
Of deeper clearness which the ocean hides
From surface vision.

Life has been to her
A kingdom all divine; not partly God's,
But His alone. Those eyes have looked upon
The glory of the mountain and the sea,
The cloud, the star, the fields of waving grain,
Man at his toil, the little child at play,
The world of longing hearts; and seen in all
A gleam of glory from the light of God.

Not unfamiliar does the new world seem,
Which on this dewy morning met her eyes;
Faces are there she oft has seen before;
The light is clearer, but it is the same
She long has known; God is the light thereof.

And in this light, her longings unfulfilled
Waken and thrill with promise. Life is full!
Her heart is free!

My lonely soul, have patience;
Again to meet thy loved one, turn thine eyes
Toward the sunrising. Thy heart to satisfy,
God grant thee vision, strength, and constant
faith;
That, some day, having seen, and served, and
suffered,
Thou gladly turn away from this dim twilight,
To greet with confidence the golden morn.

THE HILLS OF PEACE

Climb higher, friend, among the hills;
The fog and mist have dulled your heart,
Until our lives are far apart,
Our thoughts, our hopes, our wills.

You can not see the clearer lights;
The chill, damp atmosphere of doubt
Blurs all the warmth and color out
That glorify the heights.

Climb to such sunlit hills as these,
And see, through Heaven's open door,
The glad waves breaking on the shore
Of life's eternal seas.

IN MINIATURE

One sunny summer morning, after rain,
I saw, as gentle breezes flung in play
The sparkling jewels from the trees again,
A rainbow in the spray.

A tiny rainbow—not the splendid arch
Which adds its glory to Niagara's fame,
Nor that which marks the storm's victorious
march—
And yet, in kind, the same.

The Hand that paints, with colors pure and
chaste,
Niagara's masterpiece with faultless care,
Forgetting not the tiny spray, has placed
The same perfection there.

O soul complaining! If the Master share
The glory of the heavens and the sea,
Giving the trembling raindrop the same care,
Will He not care for thee?

EASTER MORN

Oh, the sad, gray morn!
When despair but increased
With the light in the East—
But a new hope was born;
For a tomb unsealed
Told of glad resurrection;
And to souls in dejection
Was the Lord Christ revealed.

Ah, soul overborne
By the burdens of life—
Pain, and evil, and strife—
See! the glad Easter morn
Shines into the West
From the tomb of our Lord;
Bringeth thee, at His word,
Joy and peace, love and rest.

EARTH LIGHTS

Glittering pendants of light
Out of a halo of mist—
Ruby and amethyst,
Crystal and pearl, in the garments of
night.

Earth's bridal veiling of dew—
Tremulous wands tipped with fire—
Gleams of a meek desire.
Which is the false and which is the true?

Star, but a point in the sky,
Mere scintillation of light!
Dewdrop, so tiny-white,
Fit in the crown of a fairy to lie!

Deep in the infinite blue,
Mighty, though moving afar,
Ever the gleaming star
Binds with invisible bonds to the true.

Yet may the same golden beam
Kindle the tiniest sphere,
Show Heaven's power here,
Picture the glory of God with its gleam.

AFTERWARD

I spoke a word of careless scorn,
And thought it was not heard;
But one fond heart its wound had borne.
I found it—afterward.

A heart with pain and care oppressed
My sympathy had stirred.
I might have brought the toiler rest:
'T was too late—afterward.

My friend could never understand
My love. It spoke no word,
Nor gave him smile nor clasp of hand.
I mourned him—afterward.

Could paths once passed again be trod,
Love's message should be heard;
And friendship's fields for Heaven and God
Should bear fruit—afterward.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

(*1 Kings 8:27-30.*)

And wilt Thou in this temple reign,
Whom Heaven and earth can not contain?
O Lord Jehovah, come Thou nigh
And hearken to Thy servant's cry.

Over this altar, Lord, we pray,
Be ever watchful, night and day;
Bless those who kneel in worship here,
And to Thy people be Thou near.

When here we pray and seek Thy face,
Hear Thou in Heaven, Thy dwelling-place.
Grant to us power for Thee to live,
And when Thou hearest, Lord, forgive.



The Shade of the Olive Tree



THE SHIP THAT HAS SAILED TO SEA

My ship sails into the harbor,
The ship I have longed to see,
Laden with joy and blessing,
The dearest of earth to me;
My ship sails into the harbor—
And my ship sails out to sea.

The joy when she makes the harbor!
The woe when she turns to sea!
Must these, while at port I linger,
Ever united be?
Must every ship that enters
Go sailing again to sea?

What is, O my soul, the cargo,
Sailing away from thee?
Cargoes of golden treasure
Are often lost at sea;
If this be the best and dearest,
It may not return to thee.

But if with love's rich treasure
The ship should laden be,

Storms may arise to threaten
The precious argosy—
But, in the Captain's pleasure,
The ship shall return to thee.

So, whether she lies in harbor,
Or whether she sails the sea,
I trust my ship to the Captain,
To bring her at last to me;
For He shall bring safe to harbor
The ship that has sailed to sea.

THE LOST GOLD

A flock of pale gold clouds come crowding out of
the West,

Out of the molten sunset, and into the nearer blue;
In the clear of the infinite distance, out of the realm
of rest,

They spring into visible being—bright phantoms
coming to view.

They float, they grow, they brighten on the distant
west-wind's breath,

Then, fading and disappearing, like the touch of
a child's caress,

Are lost in the blue of heaven. Tell me, is this
death—

After so brief a journey, to melt into nothing-
ness?

There is gold in the Western blue too fine for the
eye to see.

Glows in the laughing sunlight beauty too rare
to behold.

Some day of clearer vision the lost shall return to
Thee,

And smile again in the sunshine, and shower
Thee with its gold.

We sit in the world's half-darkness, trying, with
holden eyes,
To pierce the infinite glory of heaven's mysterious
blue.
Oh, wondrous unveiling! Oh, rapture of breath-
less, glad surprise,
When the lost gold, purified, glorified, shall re-
appear to our view.

AS ONE WHOM HIS MOTHER COMFORTETH

The Master-Prophet's glowing heart, inspired
To utter thoughts man scarce could grasp or
reach,
God's mighty tenderness His soul had fired.
That He to men this gospel high migh teach,
He strove to pour His full heart into speech.

What tenderness of earth shall rank above
The deep devotedness of any other?
That of the mated wren or brooding dove?
Only to liken it to woman's love,
Can poet picture rarest love of brother—
The love of woman—sister, wife, or mother.

As mother's touch from wounded childish
hearts
The bitterness by its magic gently drew;
As, in our later years, no healing arts
Could comfort as a mother's hand could do,
So, saith the Master, will I comfort you.

MEMORY

I stood before a statue, from the gazing throng
apart;
It held me bound with its beauty, each delicate
trace of art;
But every touch of the chisel seemed graving upon
my heart.

I heard a sound at even—a tenderly sweet refrain;
But the notes of steel set ringing forgotten chords
again,
And the nerves of my spirit quivered with an ex-
quisite sense of pain.

The Little Gray Leaves



A MOCKING BIRD'S SONG

Go list to the singer from over the sea,
Whose voice tunes your soul to its own melody;
But give me the joy and the innocent glee
 Of the song of the mocking bird.

Now listen! The still air about us awakes
Into ripples of song—as the still water breaks
With the fall of a pebble—till each echo takes
 The song of the mocking bird.

A master musician, sweet mocker, you are,
To sing me so sweetly and bring me so far
A full thousand songs in your gay repertoire—
 The songs of the mocking bird.

And now, as I lie on the grass at the feet
Of your elm tree, you sing me your program
 complete.
Do you borrow your song? What care I? It is
 sweet—
 The song of the mocking bird.

Then sing on, sweet mocker, as even draws near;
The sweetest of echoes awake to my ear
With the gay vesper song of your boundless good
cheer—
The song of the mocking bird.

THE BIRDS' CHRISTMAS

'T was a dreary day in the Northland,
And over each vale and hill
The North-wind swept, and the snowdrift crept,
And the brooks were frozen chill.

"All is blasted and sere," you say;
"All is frozen and cold."
But many a heart beat warm that day
In the land of the Vikings old.

"Christmas will soon be here," they said,
"Christ's birthday, to all so dear;
But we little can spend for gifts to our friends,
For poverty's hand is here.

"Our harvests are small, our earnings less.
We little for gifts can spare;
But we 'll bring a sheaf of the finest wheat,
And feast the birds of the air."

So, high on the old thatched barn, they raised
A generous sheaf of grain;
And the feathered throng sang a grateful song
As they gathered from hill and plain.

And the peasant said, as he bowed his head,
At sound of the songs so sweet,
“God bless the birds;” and, with solemn words,
“Thank God for the sheaf of wheat.”

DOROTHY DEE

Tell me, Oh bird in the aspen tree,
Tell me, Oh flower of the clover,
Tell me, Oh home-coming, sweet-laden bee,
Roaming the fragrant fields over,
Tell me if ever it chanced you to see
Here in your meadows my Dorothy Dee.

“We know her well,” said the bird in the tree,
Bee in the heart of the clover;
“Oft comes she down through the sweet-
scented lea,
Seeking the cool forest cover.
Bring you no harm to our Dorothy Dee;”
Thus said the bird, and the flower, and the bee.

Sing, merry bird, to your mate in the tree,
Bee, seek the heart of the clover,
While I shall find what is fairer than ye,
Dearer the heart of a lover.
“There is but one that is fairer than we,”
Answered the bird, and the flower, and the bee.

A SUNSET

I stand upon the hilltop's rounded dome,
To watch the lord of day retire from sight,
The sunbeams fade before advancing night,
And creeping shadows seek their silent home.

But darkness comes not; in its stead, behold
A glorious vision! Clouds are parted wide;
A silver bank is formed on either side,
And midst the splendor is a sea of gold.

A sea of molten gold, with waves so bright,
Rolling in silence on the silver shore,
My weary earthly eyes can look no more,
But turn, enraptured, from the wondrous sight.

A sea of liquid fire beyond the mist;
Above, around, the azure deep and wide;
A fringing halo o'er the lambent tide,
Where opalescent blends with amethyst.

THE ROSE AND THE PEARL

I

A dainty rose in the desert grew,
Where none could see
Her scented tree
But the careless bird, or the honey bee,
Though a palace would welcome her, she knew.

But she flung perfume to the breezes wild,
With a tender sigh;
While the butterfly
And the honey-seeking bee came by,
And the golden sun looked down and smiled.

II

Hid in its pearly case, a gem
Unheeded lay
Beneath the bay,
Nor knew the joy of the light of day
In which it might grace a diadem.

But the ocean whispered a prophecy—
The pearl should rest
Till the bravest and best
Should seek, not merely at wealth's behest,
The beauty which he alone could see.

THE DARK

What do you hear in the dark?
The dark!
The cool, mysterious, silent dark,
When each sense is awake, like a hungry
shark,
And must have something to feed on.
Vaguely unrecognizable noises,
Or the terror of hoarse, unfriendly voices,
In the vague, unreasoning mysteries
That our trembling fancies breed on?

What do I hear in the dark?
Hist! hark!
The blended melodies of the dark!
The music of soft, wind-ruffled rain,
Remembered voices, heard again,
With an echo of rippling laughter;
And all the sweetly familiar tunes
That a mother croons in the afternoons;
While the morning's silver cheer comes
after—
The liquid note of the meadow lark—
All this I hear in the dark.

What do you see in the dark?
The dark!
The cruel, pitiless, living dark,
That seizes and holds me, but leaves no
mark
Save a terror-stroke in my soul!
Spectral shapes, so darkly blending?
Phantom faces, never ending?
Does a nameless chill your pulses fill,
And reason lose control?

What do I see in the dark?
The dark
Brings me the faces I used to know,
Restores the beauty of long ago,
Opens the paths where I used to go
Beside the forests and streams,
And shows me the land that is always bright
With the golden glow of eternal light.
—Ah, this is better than dreams!
And this I see in the dark.

IN MAYTIME

You have heard a symphony
With but one pipe to begin it.
Then another, till the whole
Orchestra is in it.

Thus the concert of the year
Opened with one songster o'er us;
Now from every field and tree
All join in the chorus.

FLOWER SONG

From over the sea I bring my bloom,
 Beautiful, fresh, and fair,
A pulse of delicate, sweet perfume,
 Beating upon the air.

Memories hidden in hearts of gold,
 Messages sweet and true,
Love—as much as a heart can hold—
 These are my gifts to you.

Still to the skies of the Southern blue
 Memory turns again;
Here in the flower's heart so true
 Beauty is tinged with pain.

Far from the land of the sunny skies—
 Land I no more shall see—
Joy with the last poor blossom dies.
 Beauty is life to me.

THE LIBERAL YEAR

A maiden came with gentle tread,
And, at her word of tender power,
Up started leaf and bud and flower—
A resurrection from the dead.
Her name was Spring.

To fuller womanhood she came,
And gave us fruits of sun and shower,
Winning, in this more liberal hour,
Another and a nobler name—
And this was Summer.

Now, older grown, her bounty gives
To us the riches of her toil.
In full supply—fruit, corn, and oil—
All that man needs, by which he lives,
The Autumn yields.

Prepared for Winter, now so near,
By this good year thy kindness sends,
Now, as the Autumn glory ends,
We praise Thee for the generous year,
Most gracious Lord.

The Sturdy Trunk of the Olive Tree



IN THE CAUSE OF TRUTH

When a banner is uplifted in the cause of truth and right,

When the clarion call of duty summons onward in the night,

When the first heroic sentry, baffled, turns to us for aid,

Shall we cry for peace, unheeding, till dishonored peace is made?

Truth demands heroic thinking, noble action, loyal strife,

Courage, not to lose the conflict at a lesser cost than life;

For the peace of God's great Kingdom from a war with sin must rise,

Not from tolerance of evil, or some gilded compromise.

Truth has ever met its battles, martyr blood been freely shed

That some word—Truth's mighty gospel—through the nations might be sped.

While the fiery darts of error flash defiance to the
true,
Shall we take the gage of battle should it challenge
me or you?

Fear ye not! Your cause is holy—ye who struggle
for the right.

Truth advances; truth will conquer, though un-
certain seem the fight.

As the ashes of the martyr, spurned of men, were
carried free

By the brooklet to the Severn, by the Severn to
the sea;

So the truth, though crushed by error, shall in
triumph, far and wide,

Flow to conquer earth for Heaven, on the future's
great flood tide.

MY MANSION

I would not build it so,
Were I to make my choice of plan,
And rear the walls according to
The pattern of a man.

I would not lay each stone
So carefully. More rapidly would rise
The walls, although to lesser height,
To satisfy my eyes.

But when the storm should come,
Testing my scant-built buttresses—Ah
me!—
And flimsy arch, and crumbling pedi-
ment—
Vain would my labor be.

And even could it stand,
Domeless and towerless, I could not see
The glory of the sun-kissed promised
land—
The land that is to be.

THE FIRST SKIRMISH

You think I am old—too old—
That the sands of my life are run;
That younger hands must assume the work
My hands have only begun.

Old? Why! but the other day,
Youthful and gay and strong,
I stood at the very gate of life,
And thought that the way was long.

Why, look at your mother, boy—
Of my age, almost to a day—
And she is not old— What? Yes,
It is true that her hair is gray.

But she is not old—nor I!
I have vigor and fire and brawn,
And she is the same—and you dare to say
That the days of our youth are gone?

Gone? Yes, gone; but where?
A score of years in a day.
What thief has entered the heart of youth
And stolen its years away?

Old? Yes, but only in years;
And let Time bluster and rage,
For when the vigor of life is spent,
I shall know the approach of age.

Till then I will bear my part
In spite of Time's lying tongue,
And prove, by the might of an unaged will,
That my heart is forever young.

HEART THOUGHTS

Words can not tell the deepest thoughts we ponder.

They sound the depths by surfaces, and show,
Beneath skilled fingers, but imperfect visions
Of all the lights and shadows far below.

Let Mendelssohn speak to thy weary spirit—
Thy soul is kindled to responsive flame,
Yet canst thou not the Master's thought interpret,
Save to thine own heart, and without a name.

The artist paints, and critics try to follow
His concept with their words, but find at last
That art alone reveals the artist's vision
Within the soul's remoter chamber cast.

Ask what love is from lovers; they will struggle
With stubborn tongues to tell their souls' emotion,
Yet, though the poet gift their words enflame,
None trust in words to tell the heart's devotion.

So thoughts sublime hide half their richest treasure
From him who through the letter seeks their dower;
But give their noblest gifts in fullest measure
To him who gives a life to gain their power.

QUARTER CENTENNIAL ODE

(*To the North Dakota Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, October, 1911.*)

Part I.—*The Pioneers*

To this fair summit of the years ye come
Who marched together five years and a score,
To look, half sadly, down that trodden way,
Then bravely up the years that lie before.

But few are those we chiefly honor here,
Who know the toil of every weary mile.
To every comrade would the Master say,
“Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile.”

So down the narrowing vista of the years
The eye of thoughtful memory ranges far,
Where early heroes in our holy cause
Followed the vision of the westering star.

Heroes they were, unknown to worldly fame—
The common story of the pioneer—
Brave, patient, confident—in grateful praise
Let us record their loyal service here.

No bugle blast, no cheers, no battle flag,
No reinforcing host to praise their merit,
They faced the northern tempest, and that foe
More bitter still—the rebellious human spirit.

Great were their deeds; not mountain high, but
great
Like North Dakota prairies, broadly planned;
Fruitful of golden harvests, shining now
On far horizons of this northern land.

Part II.—*The Men of To-day.*

In a world where many a nation
Age on ages old appears,
Judged by hoary faiths and systems,
What are five and twenty years?

Little, to the narrow visioned;
But the prophet soul can see
In the day of small beginnings
Portents of the days to be.

Know ye not that many a kingdom
Now remembered with the great,
Lacked by far the native power
Of our young potential State?

Shall these years not have their portion
In the winning of that goal
Which rewards the land confiding
In the bulwarks of the soul?

God hath trusted us this burden.
'T is for you and me to say
If the rear shall camp to-morrow
Where the vanguard rests to-day.

Here, between the past and future,
May we view the prospect o'er.
Turning from our backward gazing,
Let us trust the way before.

For our faith must have its vision—
May it come to you and me—
Telling of the golden future
Of the land that is to be,

Of the conquests made for justice,
Of the peace conceived of love,
Of a faith unbound, all-powerful,
Of a hope that holds above,

Then, in world-embracing power,
To the future's utmost goal,
Where a love for every creature
Throbs in every creature's soul.

LINCOLN

God sought a man;
One who could stand, soul-poised, amid the
surge
Of warring factions, through a deadly strife,
Misunderstood, maligned, but guarding well
Our land beloved from wild fatuities.

God sought a man.

One who would dare
To stand alone, if need be, to protect
Our land from harm; to bear the Nation's grief
Within a broken but unconquered heart;
To risk his all with truth and righteousness—
One who would dare!

“Lo, here! lo, there!”
The wise men brought their policies of state
From capital and great metropolis.
Among them, surely, stands the chosen one,
The strong Eliab or Abinadab!
“Lo, here! lo, there!”

A man came forth—

A strangely strong man from the growing West,
Staunch-hearted as his mighty native oaks;
Like them, with heart akin to glowing fire,
Simple and tender as a loving child,

A man came forth.

This man, God knew,

Unawed by threat, unswerved by circumstance,
Would hold the eternal policy of right,
Maintain the simple loyalty of truth,
And trust the hand that never is unjust.

This man God knew.

And so he came,

The firm of hand, our nation's life to save;
The true of heart, the bondsman to make free.
Strong in our fiery testing-time, he gave
The full devotion of a manly heart.

Thank God, he came.

Olives



THE ALLIANCE

Sir Cupid is a youthful elf,
So full of songs and rhymes
That he can not restrain himself
From singing them sometimes.

Saint Valentine is old and gray,
But all his ancient years
Can never drive the smiles away
When Cupid's face appears.

The good saint spends impatient days,
Three hundred sixty-four,
Then his sincere allegiance pays
For one day's glorious war.

A triumph of diplomacy
Is this supreme alliance,
For thus they set the girls at bay,
And spinsters at defiance.

And so affection's youth they prove
To those within youth's portal;
To those beyond—that truest love
Is, like the saint, immortal.

THE POINT OF VIEW

When herb and grass and purple heather
Had given place to wintry weather,
Two artists walked the fields together.

One was a cynic. Life to him
Was seen through glasses dark and dim,
With all his world within their rim.

The other man could always hear
The world's glad song of hope and cheer
And see life's beauty through the year.

Said he, "Why let dispute be rife?
Let us unite in friendly strife
To paint our favorite views of life."

His friend agreed, "For well I know,
In time of frost and winter's snow,
Real life is only filled with woe."

Just then they saw a slender form—
A woman, from the fireside warm,
Hasting before them through the storm.

They saw, but neither spoke the thought
The moment's fleeting vision brought
Till on two canvases 't was wrought.

The one was cold and dull and gray—
Grim Winter leaped upon his prey—
A thin-clad woman on her way.

The other was a charming sight—
A lovely girl, with visage bright,
Turned to the storm with footsteps light.

The difference 't is well to trace;
The one saw not the light and grace,
The other man had seen her face.

WITH A SPRAY OF PUSSY-WILLOW

The gray of winter clouds is gone,
Now comes the gray of spring,
When nature laughs in running brooks,
And lark and robin sing;
So even gray in spring is gay
And joyful everything.

THE REVOLT OF BOYVILLE

'T was a country town, whose chief renown
Was never in history written down;
But the fact of the case,
Which was no disgrace,
Was seen in the very name of the place—
 The name of the town was Boyville.

Visitors wondered to hear the noise,
Till they learned the unusual number of boys.
There was not a family without four,
And some had nearly as many more;
While of girls there were only a couple of score
 In all the village of Boyville.

What a deafening din! What a clamor and
 clatter!
When really nothing at all was the matter.
If ever the town were in danger of harm
By fire or flood or a robber's arm,
I wonder how they could give the alarm
 In the racketey town of Boyville.

At last the people, sadly vexed,
And much perplexed what they could do next,

After a night of solemn reflection
Met on the day of the town election,
Discussing methods of strict direction
For the boisterous lads of Boyville.

And they passed a law that no boy or boys
Should raise his voice or make any noise
At home or at school or upon the street
That one could hear at six hundred feet,
On penalty of no supper to eat.

And this was the law in Boyville.

We leave to your family physician
If a healthy boy, in good condition,
Can keep from shouting once in a while
In a voice that might be heard a mile;
And every boy, without craft or guile,
Berated the laws of Boyville.

The very first night each boy, 't is said,
Went angry and supperless to bed.
Next day they met at the railway station
And fixed on a plan in their desperation;
To stay in the town would mean starvation,
So they would desert from Boyville.

Each boy wrote a letter, so appealing
To any heart that was not past feeling,
That some aunt or other,
Or good grandmother,
Or even a father's bachelor brother
Invited each boy from Boyville.

What a sudden quiet settled down
When the last boy-straggler left the town!
All a sense of relief confessed,
Yet every one felt, if he had but guessed,
In some unaccountable way oppressed
By the loss of the boys of Boyville.

At night there was none of their jolly fun,
And none of their evening tasks were done.
Fathers came home looking strangely grave,
Since there were no boys to misbehave,
And none seemed perfectly happy, save
The missing boys of Boyville.

No merry shouts of boyish laughter,
With whistled cheerfulness echoing after;
But every day an intenser quiet,
Till it even affected the people's diet,
And they almost wished for a fire or a riot
To break the stillness of Boyville.

At last the exile of boys was ended;
The laws of Boyville were so amended
That they all troup'd back one sunshiny day,
Whistling and singing, as happy and gay
As though they had never been driven away
From the beautiful town of Boyville.

But their merry tunes had softer tones;
And when they heard that Grandmother Jones
Was very ill, every boy was still,
When passing her house at the foot of the hill;
And the people said with a right good-will,
“We are glad that our town is Boyville.”

GOOD FOR WHAT?

What my kitten good for?
Jes' lick off he fur,
Play wid straws and chase he tail,
Purr, an' purr, an' purr.

When de baby see him,
My, but ain't she glad?
Guess dat what he good for—
So she won't be bad.

What de baby good for?
Mammy work! Oh my!
When she leave her, baby
Cry, an' cry, an' cry.

Good for nuffin'? No, sah.
Watch dat smile. Jes' see!
Guess my baby sister
Good enough for me.

What am dis chile good for?
Dat's a puzzle, shore.
Mammy says, "More trouble
'N any free or four."

But when I bring de kin'lins
Mammy always smile;
Call me "mammy's li'l man,
Mammy's precious chile."

DAME NATURE

A plaintive face Dame Nature wears,
Her fancied grief to make me feel;
But never can she all conceal
The smile beneath her tears.



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